

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



554154

(43) International Publication Date
18 November 2004 (18.11.2004)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2004/100590 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: H04Q 7/38,
H04L 12/18, 12/56

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/EP2004/050596

(22) International Filing Date: 23 April 2004 (23.04.2004)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
03291106.7 9 May 2003 (09.05.2003) EP

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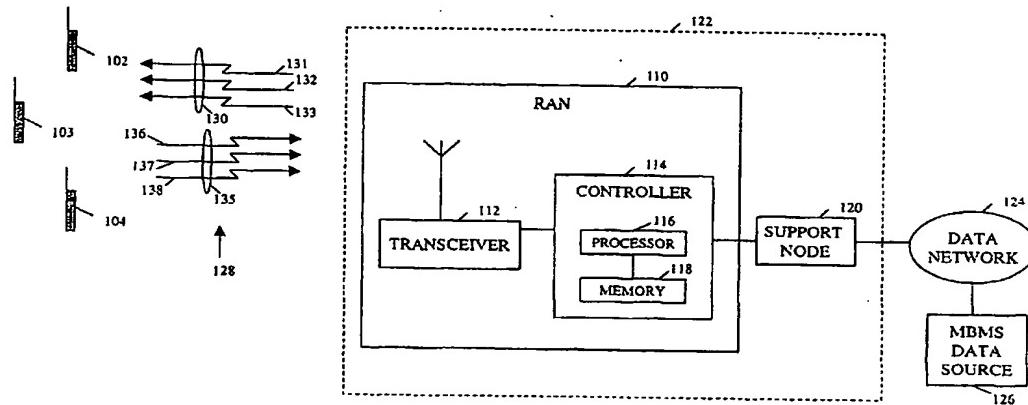
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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CONTROLLING ACCESS TO A MULTIMEDIA BROADCAST MULTICAST SERVICE IN A PACKET DATA COMMUNICATION SYSTEM



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(57) Abstract: A communication system (100) determines whether to establish a point-to-multipoint communication or a point-to-point communication for conveyance of Multimedia Broadcast Multicast Service (MBMS) data based on a number of mobile stations (MSs) (102-104), both idle mode and maintaining an active connection, serviced by the system and subscribed to an MBMS service. The system broadcasts (306) a control message that includes an access probability factor. In order to avoid overloading the system with responses to the control message, MSs maintaining an active connection ignore (506, 508) the control message while idle mode MSs determine (506, 512) whether to respond based on the access probability factor. The system compares (310) a number of received responses to a threshold and determines whether to establish a point-to-multipoint communication (312) or a point-to-point communication (322) based on the comparison. The system also adjusts (314, 330) the access probability factor based on the number of responses.

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PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW, ARIPO patent (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG)

Published:

- *with international search report*
- *before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments*

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